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Economic and Social Council

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Agenda item 5
Special economic, humanitarian and disaster relief assistance

Brazil and Republic of Korea: draft resolution

Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

The Economic and Social Council,

Reaffirming General Assembly resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991 and the guiding principles contained in the annex thereto, and recalling other relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and relevant resolutions and agreed conclusions of the Council,

Welcoming the decision to consider the theme "Building capabilities and capacities at all levels for timely humanitarian assistance, including disaster risk reduction" at the humanitarian affairs segment of its substantive session of 2008,

Welcoming also the decision to hold panels on "Disaster risk reduction and preparedness: addressing the humanitarian consequences of natural disasters, including the impact of climate change" and "Humanitarian challenges related to global food aid, including enhancing international efforts and cooperation in this field" and to hold an informal event on "Coordination in the transition phase between emergency relief and sustainable recovery",

Expressing grave concern at the increase in the number of people affected by humanitarian emergencies, including those associated with natural hazards and complex emergencies, at the increased impact of natural disasters as well as at the displacement resulting from humanitarian emergencies,

Reaffirming the need for all actors engaged with the provision of humanitarian assistance in situations of complex emergencies and natural disasters to promote and fully respect the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence,

Reiterating the need to mainstream a gender perspective into humanitarian assistance in a comprehensive and consistent manner, and taking note of the updated

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policy of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee on gender equality in humanitarian action,

Expressing its deep concern at the increasing challenges posed to Member States and to the United Nations humanitarian response capacity by the consequences of natural disasters, including the impact of climate change and by the humanitarian implications of the current global food crisis,

Condemning the increasing number of attacks and other acts of violence against humanitarian personnel, and expressing its deep concern about the implications for the provision of humanitarian assistance to populations in need,

Recognizing the clear relationship between emergency, rehabilitation and development, and reaffirming that, in order to ensure a smooth transition from relief to rehabilitation and development, emergency assistance must be provided in ways that will be supportive of recovery and long-term development, and that emergency measures should be seen as a step towards long-term development,

Welcoming the holding of the High-level Conference on World Food Security in Rome from 3 to 5 June 2008, and noting the importance of implementing its outcome, including those elements related to humanitarian assistance,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations;[1]

2. *Encourages* Member States to create and strengthen an enabling environment for the capacity-building of their national and local authorities, national societies of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, and national and local non-governmental and community-based organizations in providing timely humanitarian assistance, and also encourages the international community, the relevant entities of the United Nations system and other relevant institutions and organizations to support national authorities in their capacity-building programmes, including through technical cooperation and long-term partnerships based on recognition of their important role in providing humanitarian assistance;

3. *Stresses* that the United Nations system should make efforts to enhance existing humanitarian capacities, knowledge and institutions, including, as appropriate, through the transfer of technology and expertise to developing countries, and encourages the international community to support efforts of Member States aimed at strengthening their capacity to prepare for and respond to disasters;

4. *Urges* Member States to develop, update and strengthen disaster preparedness and risk reduction measures at all levels, in accordance with priority five of the Hyogo Framework for Action, taking into account their own circumstances and capacities and in coordination with relevant actors, as appropriate, and encourages the international community and relevant United Nations entities to continue to support national efforts in this regard;

5. *Encourages* Member States and, where applicable, regional organizations to strengthen operational and legal frameworks for international disaster relief, taking into account, as appropriate, the Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance, adopted

[1] A/63/81-E/2008/71.

at the thirtieth International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in November 2007;

6. *Calls upon* the relevant organizations of the United Nations system and, as appropriate, other relevant humanitarian actors to continue to strengthen the coordination of humanitarian assistance at the field level, including with national authorities of the affected State, as appropriate, and to further enhance transparency, performance and accountability;

7. *Recognizes* the benefits of engagement of and coordination with relevant humanitarian actors to the effectiveness of humanitarian response, and encourages the United Nations to continue to pursue efforts to strengthen partnerships at the global level with the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, relevant humanitarian non-governmental organizations and other participants of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee;

8. *Urges* Member States to continue to take the necessary steps to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel operating within their borders, recognizes the need for appropriate collaboration between humanitarian actors and relevant authorities of the affected State in matters related to their safety and security, requests the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to contribute to enhancing the safety and security of personnel involved in United Nations humanitarian operations, and urges Member States to ensure that perpetrators of crimes committed on their territory against humanitarian personnel do not operate with impunity and are brought to justice as provided for by national laws and obligations under international law;

9. *Welcomes* decisions taken during the United Nations Climate Change Conference in 2007, in particular the Bali Action Plan, encourages Member States, as well as regional organizations and relevant international organizations, in accordance with their specific mandates, to support adaptation to the effects of climate change and to strengthen disaster risk reduction and early warning systems in order to minimize the humanitarian consequences of natural disasters, including the impact of climate change, and also encourages relevant entities to continue research on these humanitarian implications;

10. *Takes note* of the recent establishment by the Secretary-General of the High-level Task Force on the Global Food Crisis, and encourages its continued engagement with Member States;

11. *Takes note with interest* of the independent study on the use of foreign military assets in disaster relief mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General,[2] emphasizes the fundamentally civilian character of humanitarian assistance, and reaffirms the need in situations where military capacity and assets are used to support the implementation of humanitarian assistance, for their use to be with the consent of the affected State and in conformity with international law, including international humanitarian law, as well as humanitarian principles;

12. *Recalls* the Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets in Disaster Relief, also known as the Oslo Guidelines, stresses the value of their use, and invites Member States to raise awareness about them;

[2] Ibid., paras. 50-55.

13. *Requests* Member States, relevant United Nations organizations and other relevant actors to ensure that all aspects of humanitarian response address the specific needs of women, girls, men and boys, including through the improved collection, analysis and reporting of sex and age-disaggregated data, taking into account, inter alia, the available information provided by States;

14. *Urges* Member States to continue to prevent, investigate and prosecute acts of gender-based violence, including sexual violence in humanitarian emergencies, calls upon Member States and relevant organizations to strengthen support services to victims of such violence, and also calls for a more effective response in this regard;

15. *Welcomes* the continued efforts to strengthen the humanitarian response capacity and the progress made in strengthening support to resident/humanitarian coordinators, including by improving their identification, selection and training, in order to provide a timely, predictable and appropriate response to humanitarian needs and to strengthen United Nations coordination activities at the field level, and requests the Secretary-General to continue efforts in this regard, in consultation with Member States;

16. *Encourages* Member States, the private sector and other relevant entities to make and consider increasing their contributions to humanitarian funding mechanisms, including consolidated and flash appeals, the Central Emergency Response Fund and other funds, based on and in proportion to assessed needs, as a means of ensuring flexible, predictable, timely, needs-based and, where possible, multi-year and additional resources, to meet global humanitarian challenges;

17. *Calls upon* United Nations humanitarian organizations, in consultation with Member States, as appropriate, to strengthen the evidence base for humanitarian assistance by further developing common mechanisms to improve the quality, transparency and reliability of humanitarian needs assessments, to assess their performance in assistance and to ensure the most effective use of humanitarian resources by these organizations;

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to reflect the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the present resolution in his next report to the Economic and Social Council and to the General Assembly on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.